



Contrasting perceptions of students and teachers: written corrective feedback

Çağla Atmaca^{a *}

^a Pamukkale University, Denizli, Turkey

APA Citation:

Atmaca, Ç. (2016). Contrasting perceptions of students and teachers: written corrective feedback. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 12(2), 166-182.

Abstract

Teacher-student negotiation in terms of corrective feedback types for written language production has been studied in some ESL (English as a Second Language) contexts. However, there needs to be more studies in some other contexts. Therefore, this study aims to find out the similarities and differences between students' and teachers' perceptions about written corrective feedback in an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) context and provide educational implications in written error treatment. For this purpose, 34 EFL teachers and 34 EFL learners were administered a questionnaire and some open-ended questions, and the gathered data were analyzed with statistical procedures and descriptive qualitative analyses. Although it was found out that there are no significant differences ($t(66) = 0.406$; $p > 0.05$) between the two groups in terms of amount and type of written corrective feedback, there exist some differences in the findings of the open-ended questions. Furthermore, some differences were fixed even within the same group, that is, there are differences in the adoption of written corrective feedback among students or teachers themselves. If teachers inform their students about what kind of written feedback will be given and what is expected from students at the onset of writing instruction, students will gain consciousness about their roles in learning and the value of the feedback in the long term.

© 2016 JLLS and the Authors - Published by JLLS.

Keywords: Corrective feedback; written corrective feedback; L2 writing, error treatment; EFL context; foreign language education

1. Introduction

Error correction is among the most important topics that are open to debate in foreign language education (Bitchener & Knoch, 2009). It is regarded as an important source of learning new information for students as it informs them about their success in their language production attempts (Yılmaz, 2013) and gives more opportunities for production and comprehension. In an EFL context, the negotiation between the student and teacher perceptions about the use of written corrective feedback gains importance for better language acquisition.

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +0-258-296-1000

E-mail address: caglaatmaca90@gmail.com

Corrective feedback is defined as responses to learner utterances with an error (Baleghizadeh & Rezaei, 2010). There are studies carried out to see the impact of feedback on student success in the short and long term both in ESL and EFL contexts (Lyster, 1998b; Han, 2002). There have been research studies conducted on the effectiveness of feedback on errors in terms of grammar correction (Ferris, 2004) or possible negative effects of correction (Truscott, 2007) since written corrective feedback has gained importance in second language (L2) writing. Because errors could give teachers clues about what is happening in student interlanguages, foreign language teachers could benefit from students' errors in their writing assignments in order to contribute to students' learning process and their own professional skills (Farrokhi, 2005; Ellis, 2009). At this point, teacher intervention comes to the fore in terms of when and how to intervene. In other words, how and how much to correct errors and give feedback change across different circumstances (Ellis, 2010; van Beuningen, 2010). While direct feedback seems to be important in terms of long-term effect (van Beuningen, de Jong, & Kuiken, 2008), some research findings may stress the use of various correction types for contributing to the accuracy levels of students because the use of written and conference feedback together was found to positively affect the use of the past simple tense and the definite article (Bitchener, Young, & Cameron, 2005).

In an EFL context, learners may not be exposed to the target language as much as the ones in an ESL context because of the lack of authentic materials and native speakers. As a result of limited exposure to spoken and written language samples, learners may fail to meet language principles and produce incorrect language (Gass, Behney & Plonsky, 2013). There are some studies on comparison of students' and teachers' perceptions about writing assignments in ESL contexts (Amrhein & Nassaji, 2010). However, students' and teachers' perceptions about the value and meaning of written corrective feedback is still an overlooked area in L2 writing in EFL contexts. Therefore, this study aims to find out the similarities and differences between students' and teachers' perceptions about written corrective feedback in Turkish EFL context and provide educational implications in error treatment.

1.1. Literature review

Corrective feedback is defined as a kind of negative feedback and includes a reply to a learner's incorrect language productions (Ellis, 2009). To ensure second language acquisition, corrective feedback is one of the ways employed to have learners focus on both form and meaning at the same time while conveying their messages in communication. That's why the value of corrective feedback has created debate in recent years (Sung & Tsai, 2014) with studies proving effectiveness and showing differences in different proficiency levels (Ammar & Spada, 2006; Ahangari & Amirzadeh, 2011).

The debate between Truscott (1996, 2007) and Ferris (1997, 1999) displays the controversy as to the effectiveness of corrective feedback. Although Truscott (1996, 2007) found grammar correction in L2 writing ineffective and harmful, and further stated that error correction has very limited benefits, Ferris (1999) disagreed with these arguments and reported that such claims were premature and overly strong. In addition, she had previously found that most of the marginal and end comments written on the first drafts improved student revision and certain kinds of commentaries were helpful (Ferris, 1997). Since the beginning of the studies related to error correction, there have been different views regarding the effectiveness and necessity of corrective feedback in the literature (Amrhein & Nassaji, 2010) and there are contradictory research results in previous studies, which necessitates more research on the usefulness of corrective feedback on language learning errors in different contexts in order to get a detailed understanding about the phenomenon in question. Ferris stresses the importance of corrective feedback in previous research studies but also points out the differing nature of the L2 writing and SLA research results in that the two groups of researchers seem to study corrective feedback in similar ways but different questions (Ferris, 2010). Such a division seems to form the

basis of the controversies upon the role of corrective feedback in language learning circumstances. The conflicting results and conclusions of the previous studies require further studies about the effects of corrective feedback in different teaching-learning contexts including EFL contexts as well.

Should English teachers correct student errors? If yes, how and why? These questions have led to the emergence of corrective feedback. Questioning the value of corrective feedback in the form of recasts has gained importance with the publication of Lyster and Ranta (1997) who identified six types of feedback namely explicit correction, recasts, clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation, and repetition. They also analyzed the effect of corrective feedback on learner uptake and it was found that almost 70% of all recasts did not lead to uptake. Another crucial point was the finding that students' L2 level was an important factor determining the type of feedback. They were both supported and criticized by further studies conducted at different contexts. That's why it is necessary to look at whether students and teachers have different perceptions about corrective feedback so that applicable results could be gathered for second or foreign language education (Russel, 2009).

In Bitchener and Knock's study, while some of the participants were in favor of correcting various errors at the same time due to the positive effects of provision of written corrective feedback on language learning, some others made criticism against focusing on more than one linguistic item to correct in students writing assignments. Finally focusing on a single occasion was suggested for long-term attainment of the related linguistic item (Bitchener & Knoch, 2009). How to respond student writing has created much interest among teachers and researchers. There are different types of corrective feedback suggested by Ellis (2009) and these include direct corrective feedback where the teacher provides the student with the correct form, indirect corrective feedback indicating the student has made an error without actually correcting it, meta-linguistic corrective feedback with providing learners with some form of explicit comment about the nature of the errors they have made. Besides, the teacher may correct all errors -called unfocused correction- or prefer to correct specific errors -called focused correction (Ellis, 2009) since teacher's choice may be affected by the proficiency level of students.

Providing corrective feedback could be considered to be writing teachers' responsibility for the benefit of students (Hyland & Hyland, 2006; Knoch, 2011) so that they can move to higher levels of language proficiency (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). However, one can come across studies with negative findings in terms of effectiveness of teachers' written feedback (Truscott, 1996). To provide an appropriate response to student language production, the teacher should have the consciousness about the amount, aim and manner of correction, which points out the importance of pre-service teacher education programs as well (Heffernan, Otsu & Kaneko, 2014). As to comparing types and impact of learners' and teachers' corrective feedback, Yangın Ekşi (2012) found that the ELT freshmen who received peer revision in composing and teacher comments only for final drafts expressed positive opinions in their reflection journals and experienced both surface-level and deep-level changes. This group also lessened the workload of the instructor.

When corrective feedback is examined in terms of socio-cultural perspective, it can be said that corrective feedback acts as input for students to process language and a specific correction type could be more effective (Sung & Tsai, 2014). Lee (2011) points out the division of ESL and EFL contexts since each has its distinctive features in different conditions and learners may not have sufficient involvement in correction process, which may increase workload of the teacher (Lee, 2011). Instead of providing the correct forms all the time, the teacher can promote peer assessment or peer revision (Yangın Ekşi, 2012) among students to facilitate writing instruction and enhance collaborative learning in EFL settings but of course learners should be informed about the value of such activities for motivation (Zhao, 2014). Thus student participation is needed in learning process by allowing them to find out their own errors and make guesses about the correct forms. Correcting errors with

providing the correct forms can be regarded as “spoon feeding” by some teachers who suggest transmission from teacher-centered classes to student-centered classes.

So what path should language teachers follow to best serve student needs? The answer comes from Rydahl's (2005) study where it was found that majority of participating teachers reported adapting the type of oral corrective feedback according to the changing needs of students in that the low proficiency group committed more errors related to content while the high proficiency group committed more errors regarding form. Peer revision could be another alternative to help language learners have different learning experiences, improve their writing both at micro and macro levels according to writing conventions and finally reduce the workload of writing instructors (Yangın Ekşi, 2012). In addition, Sung and Tsai (2014) found differences in errors made by students in different language levels in that the beginners made more lexical errors (56%) and the advanced learners made more phonological errors (61.3%), which can be traced to changing language development stages of the learners (Sung & Tsai, 2014). Such division seems important in questioning of the effectiveness of corrective feedback and how it contributes to second language acquisition in different proficiency levels considering the division of ESL and EFL contexts. Therefore more research studies comparing and contrasting student and teacher views in various teaching contexts are needed to get a detailed understanding.

1.2. Research questions

This study is concerned with similarities and differences in terms of corrective feedback types and amount based upon the instruction delivered to intermediate to advanced EFL student's writing assignments in Turkish EFL context. Since there exists very little research on the similarities and differences between student and teacher perceptions in terms of written corrective feedback in EFL contexts, the current study aims to answer the following questions:

- 1- Are there any similarities or differences between student and teacher perceptions in terms of amount of written corrective feedback in Turkish EFL context?
- 2- Are there any similarities or differences between student and teacher perceptions in terms of type of written corrective feedback in Turkish EFL context?

2. Method

The aim of this study is to find out intermediate level EFL students' and English teachers' perceptions about the use of written corrective feedback in Turkish context so descriptive research design was adopted. The study is based on mixed-methods research combining quantitative and qualitative research methods with the help of a questionnaire and open-ended questions (Dörnyei, 2007).

2.1. Participants

There were 68 participants in the study from Turkey where English is taught as a foreign language. There were 34 EFL teachers and 34 EFL learners in Turkish context. The learners were the freshmen taking advanced reading and writing skills in ELT Department at a state university. The learners are required to do the writing assignments given by the lecturer to pass the course so they produce second or final drafts to show their progress. The students coming from various backgrounds and teachers working in different settings were chosen to participate in the study in order to reflect the variability in teaching-learning circumstances. First of all, the demographic variables of the

participants need to be understood, especially those of teachers so that one could gain insight about how their teaching styles can be affected by these features. Then the relationship between the perceptions of the two groups will be examined and sample comments taken from the open-ended questions will be given.

Table 1. Descriptives of demographic variables of teachers

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Gender	34	1	1	2	1,09	,288
Marital	34	1	1	2	1,35	,485
Major	34	4	1	5	4,74	,898
Experteach	34	4	1	5	2,47	1,022
Edustatus	34	2	1	3	1,88	,409
Institutionwork	34	3	1	4	2,79	,641
Hoursteach	34	3	1	4	2,21	1,067
Howlongteach	34	3	1	4	2,18	,797
Numberstude	34	2	1	3	1,59	,657

Table 1 demonstrates the demographic information about the participating English teachers with frequency, mean and standard deviation values. Of the 34 English teachers, 31 (91.2%) are female and 3 (8.8) are male; 22 (64.7%) are single and 12 (35.3%) are married; 1 (2.9%) is graduate of American Culture and Literature, 1 (2.9%) is graduate of English Language and Literature, 1 (2.9%) is graduate of English Linguistics but high majority, that is 31 (91.2%) are graduates of English Language Teaching Department. In addition, it can be said that majority of the teachers (N=22, 64.7%) are beginning teachers since they have been teaching for 1-5 years, 2 (5.9%) of them for less than one year and 11-15 years, 3 (8.8%) for 16-20 years and finally 5 (14.7%) for 6-10 years. 5 (14.7%) of them have BA degree, while 1 (2.9%) has PhD degree and high majority (N=28, 82.4%) have MA degree forming the majority. Majority of the participating teachers (N=28, 82.4%) work at a state university while 3 (8.8%) work at state primary school, 2 (5.9%) work at state high school and 1 (2.9%) works at a private university. As for working conditions, it is seen that 11 (32.4%) of them teach less than 15 hours and this is followed by 16-20 hours (N=10, 29.4%), 21-25 hours (N=8, 23.5%) and finally 26 hours and over (N=5, 14.7%) in a week. Majority of them (N=24, 70.6%) have been teaching in the same institution for 15 years while 4 (11.8%) have been teaching for less than one year and for 11-15 years and finally 2 (5.9%) for 6-10 years. As to the number of students in their classes, half of them (N= 17, 50%) have less than 20 students, 14 (41.2%) have 21-30 students, and finally 3 (8.8%) have 31-40 students.

When we look at the students, all are freshman in ELT Department at a state university taking Advanced Reading and Writing Course. They are aged between 18 to 20; 6 (17.7%) of them are males and 28 (82.3%) are females forming majority.

2.2. Instrument

The questionnaire by Amrhein and Nassaji (2010) from University of Victoria were used and piloted as it was used in a different context, that is, EFL context. To ensure reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach Alpha's coefficient was employed and found to be .745, which indicates high level of reliability of the instrument used.

2.3. Data collection procedures

Purposeful sampling was used in that 34 English Language Teaching (ELT) students at Advanced Reading and Writing Course and 34 English teachers were chosen as sample since the questionnaire used was designed for language learners at intermediate to advanced levels. The same questionnaire was applied to both teachers and students to detect similarities and differences.

2.4. Data analysis

SPSS (16.0) was used to analyze questionnaire items while descriptive qualitative analysis was employed to analyze the comments of the participants (Dörnyei, 2007).

3. Results

Independent samples t-test was employed to see whether there exists any significant difference between students and teachers in terms of their perceptions regarding amount and type of written corrective feedback with regard to the research questions. Statistical results are shown in the tables below.

Table 2. Group statistics of participants

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Score	1,00	34	43,6765	5,55262	,95227
	2,00	34	42,6765	4,53752	,77818

Table 3. Tests of normality*

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
A1	,181	68	,000	,894	68	,000
B1	,184	68	,000	,899	68	,000
C1	,192	68	,000	,863	68	,000
D1	,258	68	,000	,839	68	,000
E1	,179	68	,000	,878	68	,000
F1	,467	68	,000	,467	68	,000
G1	,408	68	,000	,593	68	,000
Repeatmark	,385	68	,000	,625	68	,000

A2	,241	68	,000	,819	68	,000
B2	,244	68	,000	,838	68	,000
C2	,219	68	,000	,880	68	,000
D2	,216	68	,000	,899	68	,000
E2	,243	68	,000	,892	68	,000
F2	,277	68	,000	,737	68	,000

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

*Since the sample is (N:68) is less than 2000, Shapiro- Wilk is used. As to significance of the test, it is seen that $p < 0.05$ so H_0 (normality) is rejected.

Table 4. Independent samples t-test results of teachers and students

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					
								95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower Upper
score	Equal variances assumed	,699	,406	,813	66	,419	1,00000	1,22979	-1,45535 3,45535
	Equal variances not assumed			,813	63,481	,419	1,00000	1,22979	-1,45717 3,45717

It is seen that the mean difference between groups is 1.0. The variances between the two groups do not differ significantly, so we use the 'equal variances assumed' row. This shows a t-value of 0.813. The confidence interval shows that we are 95% confident that the population mean difference is between -1.45 and 3.45. An independent t-test revealed that, if the null hypothesis were true, such a result would be highly likely to have arisen ($t(66) = 0.406$; $p > 0.05$) and there is not a significant difference between two groups in terms of amount and type of written corrective feedback preferences.

3.1 Explanations of participants

The participants were given a space under the questionnaire items to express their opinions with more details and underlying reasons. Participant comments about the amount of written corrective feedback are presented below in order to exemplify the opinion presented.

3.1.1 Findings on amount of written corrective feedback

Teacher comments were coded as *T* and student comments were coded as *S*, and the numbers represent the order of the participants. When the comments of teachers and students for their choices are examined, it is seen that their answers are similar though there are some differences at some points. Participant comments will be given in italics, and comments of both groups of participants will be given and compared. The differences exist within the same group, that is, students or teachers have contrasting opinions within themselves.

For the statement: *Teachers should mark all errors*

S1 reported: *It is important that students see their errors.*

This student thinks that students need to see all of their written errors for their development.

However, S2 reported: *None of them. I think teacher should let us find out our own errors. S/he should just point out what kind of errors we did in our writing assignments. She shouldn't show them by underlying.*

Contrary to S1, this student thinks that teacher should not intervene the errors but instead the teacher should guide the students to find their own errors. In this way students may gain independence and autonomy to notice and correct their written errors.

S5 reported: *When the teacher marks all my errors, I can give up writing by thinking that I can't do it.*

S7 reported: *If the teacher does not mark all errors I can think that they are all correct.*

In the examples above it is seen that students have different reactions to the teachers' written corrective feedback in that while one prefers seeing all errors to avoid committing errors the next time, the other seems discouraged to go on writing due to marking of all errors. This shows that some students may desire agency over their language learning activities and take responsibility of learning.

Similar expectations and views have emerged in teacher comments as well. For example, T1 reported: *We should correct errors only when they hinder written communication so that we can encourage students to write.*

This teacher suggests partial intervention when needed, that is, when the message cannot be put across effectively, which may motivate the learner to go on writing to communicate.

However, T4 was in favour of marking all errors and reported: *Writing skills should be improved through literature classes and essays. The students are not native speakers so they have only 4 years to improve their English, which is already insufficient.*

T4 suggests the integration of writing skills into literature classes with the help of certain genres and points out the differing side of EFL due to the limited time for language learning.

T5 reported: *I usually mark all errors since I want them to avoid making the same error.*

T5 thinks marking all errors will attract the attention of the learners and prevent them from making the same error again.

T6, favouring marking only a few of major errors, reported: *Because when you mark all of the errors we make students unmotivated. They don't even look at their errors. The only thing they see is underlined corrected sentences which give them a message like "You are not good enough at this."*

T6 thinks correcting all errors may discourage them from writing and create a sense of failure.

Another teacher, T8, favouring marking all errors, reported: *I think they must see the correct form. I don't correct their mistakes during speaking but I don't believe that seeing their errors in writing will affect them negatively.*

T8 makes a difference between the oral and written feedback in that s/he does not give feedback in the flow of speaking but accepts the importance of giving written feedback.

T21 reported: *As a teacher who has long been teaching English to intermediate to advanced levels, I tend to mark their all major errors but ignore the minor ones. As long as the student can convey what he means and unless the grammar mistake is too important, the minor errors do not have to be corrected not to discourage students from writing.*

T21 distinguishes major and minor errors and only intervenes for the major ones referring to his/her long experience. S/he suggests giving feedback when there is a communication barrier and is not in favour of dealing with minor errors.

T25 reported: *Marking all the errors made by the students may discourage them. No one likes seeing a sheet full of mistakes corrected by a red pen. I think it is useful for the students to see their errors and try to correct them on their own by using the directions given by the teacher. However, they can do this if only they have an idea how to correct them. If the subject (for example, present perfect) is too new for them to make error correction on their own, directions or clues do not work and they need the teacher's help.*

T25 thinks that seeing all the errors may discourage learners to produce written language and suggests that the teacher should act as a facilitator who guides the learner to gain autonomy in their learning. S/he marks the readiness of the learners in that we need to consider whether the student is new to the related grammatical structure, which determines what role to follow.

In the examples above, it is seen that teachers also have different opinions on how to give feedback to intermediate to advanced student writing errors in that while some are in favour of marking all errors to prevent learners from making the same errors again, others have some hesitations to demotivate learners to go on writing and thus suggest correcting communication hindering aspects.

4.1.2 Findings on types of written corrective feedback

Now corrective feedback types preferred by teachers and students will be presented. In the questionnaire there are examples of direct, indirect and meta-linguistic correction as well as self-correction, no feedback and personal comments. There are similarities and differences between teacher and student choices with respect to the type of written corrective feedback. Again there are differences within the same group, that is, students or teachers have contrasting opinions within themselves. Below are the examples for direct correction.

S9 reported: *I always prefer to learn my errors. In this way, I can develop myself. I like C because the teacher gives the correct form of the verb and points kind of error. D is insufficient (meta-linguistic correction) because giving only kind of false is not beneficial. Teacher asserts subjectively so G is not true.*

The example above implies that direct correction is preferred by the students for personal development but leaving personal comments and just naming the types of error are not appreciated.

S10 reported: *C alternative is a good thing because the student easily understands where s/he made a mistake but D is not an enough explanation for student to understand. F is very wrong because s/he hasn't got feedback students cannot know whether his answer is correct or not. G is wrong because this comment isn't kind. Teacher should correct the error and comment kindly. As long as teacher shows the error to me, I can correct my error so I want teacher to correct my errors all the time.*

The student defends the benefit of the direct feedback of the teacher to correct errors and has negative feelings about the use of personal comments. S/he appears to receive correction in a kind way.

S11 reported: *Teacher should not mark all errors but most of them because we should see our errors and correct them. Students cannot understand the problem with directions in A. Giving no feedback is not suitable because students may make errors again and again. Personal comments are not enough for student to understand his error.*

Giving no feedback is not welcomed by the student and personal comments are not thought to be enough for the learner to notice the error. However, marking all errors are regarded as spoon-feeding since it may prevent the active involvement of the student in the learning process.

S12 reported: *Correction with comments is the most useful direction amongst them because students know why it is wrong. For me, personal comment can be offensive for students.*

Correcting with giving comments seems the mostly appreciated since it makes it possible to understand what is wrong and why. However, leaving personal comments can be perceived as offensive by the learner.

S13 reported: *Commentary is the best option to teach something. Teacher should help the student even a little. At least s/he should write “wrong tense” or underline the incorrect part. Personal comment...you are sorry to hear what? The point is if student knew the right answer s/he probably wouldn’t make an error. Besides, making comments is something stupid. Each sub-skill of writing error should be corrected for good writing so that I see my faults again and again.*

This student is insistent on receiving correction whenever the error occurs since it will help him/her see the error many times and finally contribute to its removal. Commentary is considered to be the best way of written feedback form while personal comment seems to have a negative image on the part of the learner.

S14 reported: *Teacher should mark all errors because it is useful to learn the correct items. Personal notes are unnecessary.*

Some students may feel the need to be corrected all the time they commit an error and see personal notes as unnecessary.

S15 reported: *Drawing lines makes me irritated but understand my mistake. Correction with comments is the most suitable style of giving feedback for me. Commentary is also a good way but not an efficient one. Giving no feedback does not provide me to understand from my mistake. Personal comment is meaningless and insulting for me. If I don’t understand my mistake for once s/he can make it every time it occurs so I can learn at last. All sub-skills of writing are so important for ELT students, especially grammatical, vocabulary and organizational errors because we will be English teachers and we should be perfect.*

Some students may get irritated due to the style of written feedback like drawing lines but it can help him/her notice the error. Giving comments is considered as the most effective one while commentary, giving no feedback and personal comment are considered to be ineffective in promoting the learner to notice and understand the committed error. Besides, corrective feedback is thought to be crucial for all sub-skills for the learner.

S18 reported: *Last year teachers corrected my mistake every time it occurred and I corrected my mistake ☺ For academic writing every sub-skill is important but some of them are more important. For example, vocabulary errors can result in wrong meanings but the teacher does not have the right to comment about my ideas.*

Continuous correction is appreciated by this student since it helped him/her to minimize the errors in his/her previous courses. All sub-skills, especially vocabulary, is thought to deserve attention in terms of giving corrective feedback.

S19 reported: *I can fix my error on my own. In the second time I can realise it so the teacher does not need to correct my error every time it occurs. The teacher shouldn’t give the fish but they should show how to fish. I mean saying errors directly does not make and gains but giving clues for students to fix the problem is more efficient.*

This student thinks that a committed error shouldn't be corrected all the time by the teacher since it may prevent the learner to notice and correct his/her errors. S/he also touches upon the importance of learner autonomy by citing a famous sentence to show the negative side of spoon-feeding. In other words, giving corrective feedback all the time an error occurs may not work in the long run, and s/he demands the active participation of the learner and stresses the necessity of the guiding role of the teacher.

S20 reported: *Teacher should just mark major errors because minor ones are generally because of carelessness. Using correct word and structure is more important than the other sub-skills of writing for student learning.*

This participant student thinks that not all errors should be corrected but instead the major ones should be handled since the minor errors occur due to carelessness. Besides, s/he adds that correction at word and structure level is more important than the other sub-skills of writing.

S21 reported: *When teacher marks all my errors I can understand better. When I am given feedback I check my work and understand more easily. So giving feedback is useful for me.*

Contrary to the previous participant, this student is in favour of correction of all errors since such a treatment could act as a point of reference and help the learner to check his/her work more easily.

Now teacher responses in the questionnaire regarding the type of written corrective feedback will be given with sample quotations.

T9 reported: *Marking all errors is not possible because it is tiring and also it can cause motivation loss. So I only focus on major errors. At intermediate level, it is more important to focus on the errors about ideas and organization because students are proficient enough to understand their own grammar and punctuation mistakes.*

Correction of all errors could be tiring and time consuming, and lead to loss of motivation on the part of the teacher. For these reasons this teacher is favour of marking only major errors. S/he also adds that errors about organization and ideas deserve more attention for students at this level since they are thought to have mastered certain structures so they could understand their own grammar and punctuation errors.

T10 reported: *Marking errors all the time shouldn't interfere sts' willingness to communicate or discourage them to write further.*

Like the previous teacher, this one also points out the negative effect of correction of all errors owing to the loss of student eagerness to go on writing or diminishing their initial motivation to write.

T11 reported: *Writing is the best reflection of the language errors, thus stating the major ones, but leaving out minors is a good way to provide correction. Teacher correction is spoonfeeding and stating your personal feeling is not something professional. If it is a vocabulary usage error, then correcting once is enough. If it is a grammar error of the same topic, then it would be necessary to correct more than once. If we are to talk about intermediate to advanced level of students, it is not only our choice to correct their errors, but also they demand it. As a teacher working with upper int to advanced students I have always been asked to provide correction for their written assignments. This level of students are open to learn about their mistakes and eager to improve themselves, so detailed correction is necessary.*

This teacher explains the importance of writing for its features to reveal student's language level and the errors are thought to be the reflections of students' language proficiency demonstrating their strong and weak points. Like the previous teachers, s/he also makes a difference between major and minor errors by suggesting more focus on the former and the exclusion of the latter. While s/he explains that correction could turn into a spoon-feeding action, s/he finds leaving personal notes for the

correction unprofessional. Amount of correction may change depending on the type of the error. In addition, s/he thinks that correction should be given as long as students demand because learners at this stage are considered to be open to learning their errors.

T15 reported: *I think they should know their mistakes and pay attention not to make them next time. It depends on the type of error I think. Some errors should be corrected if they occur more than once in order to avoid fossilization. But error correction should be delayed and constructivist. Why should we differentiate the errors. They should all be corrected in written work in an exam. But this is true for product-based approach. If this writing is a process-based one, then we do not need to correct each and every bit. Instead the focal point should be corrected more, and others can be touched upon in general.*

This teacher also attaches importance to written corrective feedback to help the learner to focus on their weak points in writing. However, the amount and type of the correction are thought to depend on the type and frequency of occurrence of the error in that the repeated errors may cause fossilization so they need to be corrected in a constructivist way. S/he also makes a difference between the product-based and process-based writing approach since the approach employed will shape the way of dealing with errors.

T21 reported: *Organization errors are important as the student may have to prepare a formal writing assignment in the future. A writing paper without unity or coherence is not able to put the idea across well enough and may bring about confusion. Grammar errors must be corrected as long as they are not very minor. One of the aims of the writing paper is make sure if the student can put what he/she learned into practice. Vocabulary errors must exactly be pointed out because they function like the skeleton of the sentence just as grammar.*

This teacher states that each sub-skill of writing deserves attention since each forms a different part of the final message to be delivered. For example, vocabulary is seen as the skeleton of the sentence and the necessity of coherence is stressed for real-life writing. The importance of written corrective feedback is seen to pave the way for an effective communication and regarded to be an important factor to reduce the gap between theory and practice.

As seen in the examples above, there are student opinions which are both similar to and different from those of teachers. What is striking is that some students prefer pointing out the error and provision of the correct version by the teacher so they prefer direct correction and do not favour indirect or meta-linguistic correction. Generally, the students think that giving no feedback is not useful for learning and that writing personal comments may insult the student. Besides, they oppose correction of their ideas by the teacher and take it as a way of invading privacy. However, some teachers think that direct correction may have *spoon feeding* effect on students so they prefer suggesting extra resources or making meta-linguistic correction for the sake of inquiry-based learning and helping students to gain autonomy for self-correction. In addition, some of the teachers think that continuous correction may discourage students to produce language. There are similarities between the two groups. Three points where the students and teachers agreed are that writing personal comments may not help students or seem offensive for students. Secondly, providing no comment is regarded not to enhance students' understanding of the correct language use and form, and thus result in lack of proper language knowledge. Finally, as the students are expected to become English teachers in the future, both groups of participants highlighted the need for gaining high proficiency levels in writing skills as a part of professional skills and competences. While some participants emphasized gaining competence in all areas of writing skills, a small amount of participants indicated that content and organization were the most important issues in giving feedback since these can intervene communication and lead to misunderstanding.

4. Discussion

This study aimed to find out the similarities and differences between intermediate-advanced learners and writing instructors in terms of amount and types of written corrective feedback in Turkish EFL context. Based on mixed-methods research design, the study employed both a questionnaire and some open-ended questions to get more detailed insights about the phenomenon in question. In light of the statistical data analysis procedures, no statistically significant differences were found between the students and teachers in terms of the amount and type of written corrective feedback. However, there were some contrasting ideas between the students and teachers in terms of the amount and types of written corrective feedback. Even there were differences within the same groups. In other words, the students and teachers held different views from their peers or colleagues. For example, some students were in favour of marking of all errors for noticing their errors and avoiding repetition while some others claimed agency for their own learning and opposed teacher intervention. The similar situation also goes for teachers in that some teachers favoured marking all errors to prevent future errors due to the fact that these participants will become English teachers and English will become their profession while some others differentiated the major and minor errors examining whether the error hinders written communication or not. One teacher suggested integration of writing classes into literature classes to help students gain consciousness about various genres and improve their writing skills at the same time. As indicated above, while some students expected complete corrective feedback by marking of all errors, some students explained the need for more autonomous and guiding teaching style. In this sense, the teacher may act like a facilitator or guide while leading the learning of their students. S/he can make different preferences depending upon the level of students, frequency and type of occurrence of the error, or complexity of the new input.

The study findings display both similarities and differences with those of the previous studies. Echoing Bitchener and Knoch, (2009), Yangın Ekşi (2012), and Sung and Tsai (2014), it was concluded that correcting more than one item at the same time may seem overwhelming for some learners and tiring for the instructor since it can increase their workload. Coined by Ellis (2009), correcting specific errors, or shortly focused correction, may yield favourable results in some teaching contexts. Maybe instead of correcting all items at the same time, the teacher can focus on only one specific language item for detailed feedback in the long term. Such *discrete point correcting* can ease learning process by having students paying attention specific items separately but such an implication may require a long time. Therefore, time allocated for improving student writing in ELT programmes in Turkey should be increased. Additionally, language skills of ELT students should be enhanced separately in the first year of the programme but then they should also get feedback about how to teach integrated skills because gaining expertise in one language area requires considerable time and calls for deeper attention from teachers. If student teachers experience error correction at first hand in their education, they can make conclusions regarding how to treat errors and form their teaching styles accordingly, which will equip them with the needed practical knowledge to overcome difficulties in real classes in their future teaching career. Finally, students should be encouraged to produce the second or final draft for correct language production and benefit from writing instruction in the long term.

This study findings also show parallelism with those of Amrhein and Nassaji (2010) in that it displayed both similarities and difference between teachers' and students' perceptions about the usefulness and amount of different written corrective feedback types. While some students tended to prefer continuous correction due to frequently made errors and favoured direct correction, teachers tended to guide learners to find out and correct their mistakes instead of marking all errors continuously and thus encouraging student involvement in the correction process. However, there were some

differences between the study findings and those of previous studies. For example, the study results partly agree with those of Truscott (1996, 2007) in that some students and teachers indicated that marking all errors could be detrimental in learning since it can demotivate students and tire writing instructors. It can also damage learner autonomy. However, the study findings differ from those of Truscott (1996, 2007) in that most of the participants touched upon the healing side of written corrective feedback reporting that it helps learners to notice the gaps in their linguistic knowledge, give them the opportunity to revise their linguistic output and guide their own learning. Additionally, examining more than 1600 marginal and end commentaries written of 110 first drafts of 46 advanced university students, Ferris (1997) found that most of these comments could lead to student revision and some commentary types are more helpful than the others. Parallel with Ferris (1997), some students valued certain types of written corrective feedback more than the others. First of all, some students saw the commentary as the best option for pointing out the errors and helping the students noticing their lacking aspects while they did not value direct correction in the same way. However, some students preferred direct correction to notice their errors, found metalinguistic correction insufficient and did not approve the use of personal comments of the teacher. Some even found the use of personal comments impolite, unnecessary and offensive. However, one of the points where the students and teachers agreed belongs to “giving no feedback” item because both groups thought that giving no feedback about errors was counterproductive since it might pave the way for making the same errors in the future by giving the student sense that what s/he did was correct.

5. Conclusion

Differences in teacher and student expectations in terms of written corrective feedback may cause misunderstanding or misinterpretation in the value of the feedback so both teachers and learners need to have similar perceptions about the reasons of corrective feedback. If teachers explicitly explain their expectations from learners at the start of writing courses, learners can benefit from the feedback better in their assignments (Heffernan, Otsu, & Kaneko, 2014). Teachers should also consider proficiency level of students and inform their students about what to focus on and what is expected from them while providing direct written corrective feedback to help them sustain their motivation (Bitchener & Knoch, 2009). Corrective feedback can be useful to decrease student errors in the short term but if we want to get permanent learning outcomes, then learners should revise their written work and produce second or final drafts so that they can pay specific attention on their errors (Ellis, 2009) because giving a certain kind of feedback does not guarantee acquisition of the related language item. What happens after the provision of feedback and how this correction contributes to language learning experiences of learners are also important because error treatment can have long-term effects on student language production and influence ultimate attainment of learners. As seen in the above-mentioned examples, lack of written corrective feedback may result in permanent and unchangeable linguistic behaviours or choices in the long-term, which may end up with fossilization.

Ultimately, the detrimental or useful effects of written corrective feedback directs the attention to the desired language teacher qualifications. How to guide learners to monitor their progress and decrease their errors require certain professional skills and competencies. Therefore, both pre-service and in-service English teachers can take seminars on how to correct errors as a part of teacher training programs (Lee, 2011). Alternatively, learners can be encouraged to assess both their own and their friends' language productions via peer assessment so that they take the responsibility for their own learning and can get used to correcting their own errors (Yangın Ekşi, 2012; Zhao, 2014).

In sum, the distinct nature of the native language and target language can make learning process easier or more difficult for learners and cause learners to produce incorrect language samples in their writing assignments. How teachers respond to students' written errors and how this error treatment contributes to learning process come to the fore as debatable issues. In this respect, proficiency level of students draws attention since teachers may adopt a different error treatment in line with differing language levels of students. Likewise, in this study it was found that intermediate to advanced level English learners have special demands from their teachers since they are educated to be English teachers in the future and their writing instructors agree that such students' writing assignments need correcting to contribute to their professional skills and competences.

References

- Ahangari, S., & Amirzadeh, S. (2011). Exploring the teachers' use of spoken corrective feedback in teaching Iranian EFL learners at different levels of proficiency. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 29, 1859-1868.
- Ammar, A., & Spada, N. (2006). One size fits all? Recasts, prompts, and L2 learning. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 28, 543-574.
- Amrhein, H. R., & Nassaji, H. (2010). Written corrective feedback: What do students and teachers prefer and why? *Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 13(2), 95-127.
- Baleghizadeh, S., & Rezaei, s. (2010). Pre-service teacher cognition on corrective feedback: a case study. *Journal of Technology & Education*, 4(4), 321-327.
- Bitchener, J., Young, S., & Cameron, D. (2005). The effect of different types of corrective feedback on ESL student writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 14(3), 191–205.
- Bitchener, J., & Knoch, U. (2009). The value of a focused approach to written corrective feedback. *ELT Journal*, 63(3), 204-211.
- Bitchener, J., & Knoch, U. (2009). The contribution of written corrective feedback to language development: A ten-month investigation. *Applied Linguistics*, 31(2), 193–214.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics. Quantitative, qualitative and mixed methodologies*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, R. (2009). Corrective feedback and teacher development. *L2 Journal*, 1(1), 3-18.
- Ellis, R. (2009). A typology of written corrective feedback types. *ELT Journal*, 63(2), 97-107.
- Ellis, R. (2010). A framework for investigating oral and written corrective feedback. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 32(2), 335–349.
- Farrokhi, F. (2005). Teachers' stated beliefs about corrective feedback in relation to their practices in EFL classes. *Journal of Faculty of Letters and Humanities*, 49, 91-131.
- Ferris, D. R. (1997). The influence of teacher commentary on student revision. *TESOL Quarterly*, 31(2), 315-329.
- Ferris, D. (1999). The case of grammar correction in L2 writing classes: A response to Truscott (1996). *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 8(1), 1-11.

- Ferris, D. (2004). The "grammar correction" debate in L2 writing: Where are we, and where do we go from here? (and what do we do in the meantime?). *Journal of Second Language Writing* 13(1), 49-62.
- Ferris, D. R. (2010). Second language writing research and written corrective feedback in SLA. Intersections and practical applications. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 32, 181–201. DOI:10.1017/S0272263109990490.
- Gass, S. M., Behney, J., & Plonsky, L. (2013). *Second Language Acquisition: an introductory course*. (4th Ed.) New York: Routledge.
- Grabe, W., & Kaplan, R. B. (1996). *Theory and practice of writing*. London and New York: Longman.
- Han, Z. (2002). A study of the impact of recasts on tense consistency in L2 output. *TESOL Quarterly*, 36(4), 543–572.
- Heffernan, N., Otsoshi, J., & Kaneko, Y. (2014). Written feedback in Japanese EFL classrooms: A focus on content and organization. *The Journal of Language Teaching and Learning*, 4(1), 55-68.
- Hyland, K. & Hyland, F. (2006). Contexts and issues in feedback on L2 writing. Hyland, K. & Hyland, F. (Eds.) (pp.1-19). *Feedback in second language writing: contexts and issues*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Knoch, U. (2011). Rating scales for diagnostic assessment of writing: What should they look like and where should the criteria come from? *Assessing Writing*, 16, 81-96.
- Lee, I. (2011). Feedback revolution: what gets in the way? *ELT Journal*, 65(1), 1-12.
- Lyster, R., & Ranta, L. (1997). Corrective feedback and learner uptake: Negotiation of form in communicative classrooms. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 19(1), 37–66.
- Lyster, R. (1998b). Negotiation of form, recasts, and explicit correction in relation to error types and learner repair in immersion classrooms. *Language Learning*, 48(2), 183–218.
- Rydahl, S. (2005). Oral feedback in the English classroom: Teachers' thoughts and awareness. Retrieved on May 15, 2014 from <http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:6576/FULLTEXT01.pdf>.
- Russel, V. (2009). Corrective feedback, over a decade of research since Lyster and Ranta (1997): Where do we stand today? *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 6(1), 21–31.
- Sung, K. & Tsai, H. (2014). Exploring student errors, teachers' corrective feedback, learner uptake and repair, and learners' preferences of corrective feedback. *The Journal of Language Teaching and Learning*, 4(1), 37-54.
- Truscott, J. (1996). The case against grammar correction in L2 writing classes. *Language Learning*, 46(2), 327-369.
- Truscott, J. (2007). The effect of error correction on learners' ability to write accurately. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 16(4), 255-272.
- van Beuningen, C. G., de Jong, N. H., & Kuiken, F. (2008). The effect of direct and indirect corrective feedback on L2 learners' written accuracy. *Review of Applied Linguistics*, 156, 279-296.

- van Beuningen, C. (2010). Corrective feedback in L2 writing: Theoretical perspectives, empirical insights, and future directions. *International Journal of English Studies*, 10(2), 1-27.
- Yangın Ekşi, G. (2012). Peer review versus teacher feedback in process writing: How effective? *International Journal of Applied Educational Studies*, 13(1), 33-48.
- Yılmaz, Y. (2013). Relative effects of explicit and implicit feedback: The role of working memory capacity and language analytic ability. *Applied Linguistics*, 34(3), 344–368.
- Zhao, H. (2014). Investigating teacher-supported peer assessment for EFL writing. *ELT Journal*, 68(2), 155-168.

Öğrenci ve öğretmenlerin çelişen görüşleri: yazılı düzeltici dönüt

Öz

Yazılı dil üretimi için düzeltici dönüt bakımından öğretmen-öğrenci anlaşması İngilizce'nin ikinci dil olarak okutulduğu bazı yerlerde çalışılmıştır fakat farklı bağlamlarda daha çok çalışmalara ihtiyaç vardır. Bu yüzden bu çalışma İngilizce'nin yabancı dil olarak okutulduğu bir bağlamda yazılı düzeltici dönüt hakkında öğrenci ve öğretmen görüşleri arasındaki benzerlikleri ve farklılıkları bulmayı ve yazılı hata yaklaşımında eğitimsel uygulamalar sunmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu amaçla İngilizce'nin yabancı dil olarak okutulduğu bir bağlamda 34 İngilizce öğretmenine ve 34 İngilizce öğrenene bir anket uygulanmış ve birkaç açık uçlu soruya cevap vermeleri istenmiştir. Elde edilen veri istatistiksel yöntemlerle ve betimleyici nitel analiziyle çözümlenmiştir. İki grup arasında yazılı düzeltici dönütün miktarı ve türü açısından herhangi farklılıklar olmamasına rağmen ($t(66) = 0.406$; $p > 0.05$), açık uçlu soruların bulgularında bazı farklılıklar mevcut olduğu bulunmuştur. Buna ek olarak, aynı grup içerisinde bazı farklılıklara rastlanmıştır, yani, öğrencilerin ve öğretmenlerin kendi aralarında yazılı düzeltici dönütün kullanımıyla ilgili bazı farklılıklar vardır. Eğer öğretmenler öğrencileri, yazı eğitiminin başında ne tür yazılı dönütün verileceğini ve onlardan ne beklendiği konusunda onları bilgilendirirse, öğrenciler kendi rolleri ve verilen dönütün uzun vadedeki değeri hakkında farkındalık kazanacaklardır.

Anahtar sözcükler: Düzeltici dönüt; yazılı düzeltici dönüt; yabancı dil yazma eğitimi, hata muamelesi; İngilizce'nin yabancı dil olarak okutulduğu bağlam; yabancı dil eğitimi

AUTHOR BIODATA

Çağla Atmaca works as a research assistant in English Language Teaching department at Pamukkale University. She had her BA in English Language Teaching department at Pamukkale University in 2011, her MA from the same department in 2013 and her PhD at Gazi University in 2016. She worked as a research assistant in English Language Teaching department at Gazi University between the years 2011-2016. Her field of interests are educational technology, teacher education, discourse analysis and intercultural communication